

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 042298
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R 170233Z PEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS
XMT AMEMBASSY PORT MORES0Y

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 042298

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, SHUM, PARM, ETRD, BEXP, TW

SUBJECT: EA/ROC WEEKLY STATUS REPORT

1. A TAIWANESE VICE PRESIDENT (CONFIDENTIAL)

PREMIER CHIANG CHING-KUO HAS CHOSEN A TAIWANESE, HSIEH TUNG-MIN, THE PRESENT GOVERNOR OF TAIWAN, TO BE THE NEXT ROC VICE PRESIDENT. HSIEH'S NOMINATION BY THE KUOMINTANG THIS WEEK ASSURES HIS ELECTION NEXT MONTH TO THE HIGHEST POST EVER HELD BY A TAIWANESE. THIS POLITICALLY SYMBOLIC CHOICE IS PART OF CHIANG'S CONTINUING EFFORT TO GIVE TAIWANESE A SENSE OF GREATER PARTICIPATION, AND THEREBY STAKE, IN THE ROC GOVERNMENT AND THE KMT. HSIEH'S CAUTIOUS MANNER, LOYALTY TO CHIANG, AGE AND DECLINING HEALTH INDICATE THAT HE WILL NOT HAVE A STRONG HAND IN DECISION-MAKING, DEVELOP NO INDEPENDENT POWER, CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 STATE 042298

AND WILL NOT BE CHIANG'S SUCCESSOR. HSIEH WAS BORN ON TAIWAN, EDUCATED ON THE MAINLAND, AND HAS BEEN A KMT APPARATCHIK MOST OF HIS ADULT LIFE. AFTER THE FORMALITY OF THE ELECTION AT THE END OF MARCH, CHIANG CHING-KUO WILL HAVE TO CHOOSE A NEW PREMIER AND A NEW GOVERNOR OF TAIWAN.

2. TAIWAN TEXTILE FEDERATION LETTER TO AMBASSADOR
(CONFIDENTIAL)

EMBASSY TAIPEI REPORTS RECEIPT OF A LETTER ADDRESSED TO AMBASSADOR UNGER FROM THE TAIWAN TEXTILE FEDERATION RESTATING THE ROC POSITION ON BILATERAL TEXTILE NEGOTIATIONS. THE LETTER REITERATES CHARGES OF UNFAIR TREATMENT TO THE ROC IN SENSITIVE IMPORT CATEGORIES COMPARED TO AGREEMENTS ALREADY NEGOTIATED WITH HONG KONG AND KOREA. THE LETTER IS INCORRECT IN AVERRING THAT THE U.S. SIDE HAS NOT OFFERED COMPENSATION FOR REDUCTIONS IN SENSITIVE CATEGORIES AND IN ITS ASSERTIONS ABOUT THE SECTION OF THE U.S. TEXTILE INDUSTRY PRODUCING GOODS IN THESE CATEGORIES. THE THIRD ROUND OF US/ROC BILATERAL TALKS BEGINS FEBRUARY 21 IN WASHINGTON. THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THE ROC WILL BE WILLING TO ACCEPT A MODEST ROLLBACK IN EXPORTS TO THIS COUNTRY OF THE MOST SENSITIVE CATEGORIES AS LONG AS REASONABLE COMPENSATION CAN BE AGREED UPON IN ITEMS OF INTEREST TO THE ROC. IF THIS IS THE CASE, PROSPECTS FOR REACHING AGREEMENT NEXT WEEK SEEM FAIRLY BRIGHT.

3. TAIPEI PRESS CARRIES HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT
(CONFIDENTIAL)

ROC PRESS REPORTS ON OUR 1978 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ARE
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PAGE 03 STATE 042298

ONE SIGN OF A TREND TOWARD SOMEWHAT GREATER PRESS FREEDOM ON TAIWAN. ONE IMPORTANT PAPER, THE CHINA TIMES, CARRIED AN ALMOST COMPLETE AND GENERALLY ACCURATE TRANSLATION OF THE REPORT, USING A COPY WE HAD GIVEN TO THE PAPER'S WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT. BY CONTRAST, IN 1977 NEITHER OUR HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT NOR BURT LEVIN'S CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY WERE REPORTED IN THE LOCAL PRESS. THIS YEAR'S COVERAGE SHOULD ENCOURAGE THE MORE OPEN AND FORTHRIGHT DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES WHICH IS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN OUR APPROACH TO THESE PROBLEMS IN THE ROC.

4. REFUGEES (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

OUR EFFORTS TO EXPLAIN THE REFUGEE ISSUE TO THE ROC PRESS CORPS HERE LED ONE REPORTER (UNITED DAILY NEWS) TO FILE A STORY ON THE SUBJECT LAST FRIDAY. THE REPORTER STILL DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER HIS PAPER WILL CARRY THE STORY.

5. PRESIDENT APPROVES ARMS TRANSFER CASES

(CONFIDENTIAL)

FOLLOWING HIS DECISION ON THE ARMS TRANSFER CEILING,
THE PRESIDENT HAS APPROVED NOTIFICATIONS TO CONGRESS
OF SEVERAL FMS CASES INCLUDING THREE FOR THE ROC.
THESE ARE 90 ADDITIONAL I-HAWK MISSILES FOR THE
2ND I-HAWK BATTALION, (DOLLARS 12 MILLION) CO-PRODUCTION
OF AN ADDITIONAL 20 F-5S BRINGING THE AUTHORIZED PRO-
GRAM UP TO 200 AIRCRAFT (DOLLARS 35 MILLION) AND 600
SIDEWINDER MISSILES (DOLLARS 16 MILLION). THESE CASES
WILL NOW PROCEED INDIVIDUALLY AND ROUTINELY THROUGH THE
CONGRESSIONAL NOTIFICATION PROCESS. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE
ROC WILL BE OFFICIALLY INFORMED THROUGH NORMAL MILITARY
CHANNELS, THOUGH IT HAS PROBABLY ALREADY LEARNED
OF OUR DECISION FROM ITS CONTACTS IN DOD.
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PAGE 04 STATE 042298

6. ANOTHER REPORT OF BUS SALE TO U.S. COMPANY
(CONFIDENTIAL)

ACCORDING TO WASHINGTON REPRESENTATIVE OF GREYHOUND
TAIWAN HIGHWAY BUREAU HAS DECIDED TO PURCHASE 50 BUSES
EITHER FROM GREYHOUND OR GENERAL MOTORS. GREYHOUND
REP SAID A COMPANY EXECUTIVE WAS IN TAIPEI EARLY THIS
WEEK AND WAS TOLD THE CONTRACT DEFINITELY WOULD GO TO
GREYHOUND, ASSUMING THE COMPANY CAN LOWER ITS BID TO

MATCH THE OFFER MADE BY GM. MERCEDES BENZ OF WEST
GERMANY, THE ONLY OTHER MAJOR CONTENDER FOR THE SALE,
REPORTEDLY HAS BEEN RULED OUT.
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